

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 114311

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:PFMORRIS:JVC

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NSC - MR. LOW

S/S- O:P.JOHNSON

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R 160101Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON PANAMA

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED VIA USIA ON MAY 11 SECRETARY KISSINGER'S STATEMENT OASGA ON PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS, PRESIDENT FORD'S REMARKS AT WHITE HOUSE ON SATURDAY EVENING AND CHAIRMAN LIEVANO'S REPLY. TO COMPLETE YOUR FILE OF RECENT OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON PANAMA, FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY'S REPLY TO A QUESTION ON THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT ON THE PANAMA CANAL ON APRIL 25.

2. BEGIN QUOTE: MR. NESSEN: THE PRESIDENT SUPPORTS THE NEGOTIATIONS NOW UNDERWAY ON THE CANAL. THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO CALL TO YOUR ATTENTION DR. KISSINGER'S REMARKS IN HIS SPEECH IN HOUSTON IN WHICH HE TALKED AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT THE QUESTION OF AMERICAN INTEREST IN THE CANAL.

IN CASE YOU DON'T RECALL SECRETARY KISSINGER'S REMARKS, HE SAID, 'WE WILL EXPECT PANAMA TO UNDERSTAND
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PAGE 02 STATE 114311

OUR PERSPECTIVE THAT THE EFFICIENT, FAIR AND SECURE

OPERATION OF THE CANAL IS OF VITAL ECONOMIC AND SECURITY INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES, THAT A NEW TREATY MUST PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATION AND DEFENSE OF THE CANAL BY THE UNITED STATES FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME, AND

THAT A NEW TREATY MUST PROTECT THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF OUR CITIZENS AND PROPERTY IN PANAMA.'

SECRETARY KISSINGER CONTINUED, 'A NEW TREATY BASED ON THESE PRINCIPLES WILL MAKE THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA PARTNERS IN THE OPERATION OF THE CANAL, PROTECT THE ESSENTIAL NATIONAL INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES AND PROVIDE A SECURE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE LONG TERM.'

TO SUM UP THE PRESIDENT'S OWN VIEWS, HE HAS NO INTENTION OF SUPPORTING ANY AGREEMENT THAT WOULD NOT PROTECT AMERICA'S VITAL DEFENSE INTERESTS. END QUOTE.

3. THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT REFERENCES TO THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON DURATION OF A TREATY. AS THE FILE SHOWS, THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF MADE ONLY ONE STATEMENT, WHICH DID NOT MENTION DURATION. THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY'S STATEMENT REFERRED TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S REMARKS ON DURATION. IN YOUR DISCUSSION WITH GOP OFFICIALS YOU MAY WANT TO MAKE THIS DISTINCTION. KISSINGER

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